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REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE STRENGTHENING OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

Letter dated 13 July 1993 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Yugoslavia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit herewith (see annex) the comments regarding the letter dated 18 June 1993 addressed to you by Mr. Valentic, Prime Minister of the Republic of Croatia, and circulated as an official document of the General Assembly on 21 June 1993 (A/48/215, annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as an official document of the General Assembly under item 79 of the preliminary list.

(Signed) Dragomir DJOKIC
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

* A/48/50.

ANNEX

Comments regarding the letter dated 18 June 1993 from the Prime Minister of the Republic of Croatia to the Secretary-General

In the persistent attempts of the Republic of Croatia to upgrade its image in the world by distorting historical facts, its officials even go so far as to present outright falsehoods to the world public concerning events that have been witnessed by all. For the sake of truth as well as the integrity and authority of the world Organization, attention should be drawn to a series of flagrant untruths contained in the letter of the Croatian Prime Minister, Mr. N. Valentic, addressed to the Secretary-General on 18 June 1993.

Despite the unprecedented information blockade, one-sided and unprovoked vilification of the entire Serb people, threatened with genocide, it has finally become evident that the main cause of the crisis and the war in former SFR of Yugoslavia is the forcible, armed and illegal secession of the former Yugoslav republics of Slovenia and Croatia from the SFR of Yugoslavia. Regrettably, the international community, under the pressure of certain powerful international factors, rewarded and legalized this illegal act through premature recognition. Forcible secession constituted a flagrant violation not only of the Constitution of the sovereign SFR of Yugoslavia but also of the basic principles and norms of international law, including the Charter of the United Nations and the CSCE provisions relating to the inviolability of international borders. Attacks on the regular army (JNA) of a sovereign State of which the republic of Croatia was a part, expulsion of JNA by force from the territory which was, at the time, a part of the sovereign and unitary SFRY, forcible seizure of military facilities and weapons and unconstitutional establishment of a national army - cannot be presented, even in the most unscrupulous propaganda, as Serbia's aggression against the Republic of Croatia. It is an irrefutable fact that, at the time, Serbia and Croatia were parts of a single Yugoslav State entity.

The consequences of such an act were mostly felt by the Serb people in Krajina, who after the forced break-up of Yugoslavia and the establishment of the Republic of Croatia, were separated by force from their motherland and turned from a nation into a national minority. Only the Serb people had been denied the right to self-determination and only the Serb people in the secessionist republics were forced to accept the status of second-rate citizens. It is the natural and internationally recognized right of all, including the Serb people, not to accept such a treatment. The Serb people in Krajina clearly expressed this at the referendum when almost one hundred percent declared themselves against the forcible separation from the common state. Depriving the Serb people of the status of an equal nation in the Croatian Constitution, augmented by their fresh memories of the genocide committed against them in the fascist Independent State of Croatia in World War II (it is a

historical fact that in the Jasenovac concentration camp alone 700,000 Serbs, Jews and gypsies were killed), rekindled their fears of renewed genocide and aroused their desperation. When the undemocratic Croatian regime, whose only goal was the realization, at any cost, of a 1000 year-long dream of a national State of Croats encompassing the territories of Krajinas, inhabited by Serbs for centuries, came to power and when it referred to the continuity of the Independent State of Croatia, an entity created by fascist Germany, old animosities, open threats and intimidation of Serbs were revived. Serbs were "disciplined" in the most brutal way.

The human rights situation in the Republic of Croatia was also illustrated by the fact that, due to drastic human rights violations, it was denied assistance from the PHARE European Parliament program.

In the first half of 1992, unlawfulness escalated in the work of many state organs primarily to the detriment of Serbs: they were laid off; they were illegally evicted from their apartments, particularly families of JNA officers and retirees who were declared an enemy; they were harassed and humiliated at home, at work places, at public gatherings and mass media; they were called insulting names; mass destruction of Serb facilities and apartment buildings particularly in the areas where Serbs were the majority population, or fled because of threats, ocurred. The Serb population was declared a collective culprit for the atrocities committed in the war in Croatia, although it was the greatest victim of this war.

In the second half of 1992, the following human rights violations were the most frequent: job dismissals, denial of citizenship on grounds of national origin and its conditioning with the statements of loyalty, physical and mental abuses, dynamiting of facilities and apartments, (according to the substantiated data of the "European Civic Forum", in Zagreb alone about 6,000 Serb houses were blown up), failure to prosecute perpetrators of criminal acts committed against Serbs and other forms of discrimination based on national origin.

A logical consequence of this was massive flight of Serbs not only from the war-torn area, but also from those which were not affected by the war, to the territory of Krajina, where they braced themselves for defence and to other parts of the former SFRY - primarily to Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Following the outbreak of the war there, the exodus of Serbs began towards the FR of Yugoslavia and other European and non-European countries. The following facts are a clear illustration of this:

- Many areas in Croatia have been ethnically cleansed of Serbs although these areas were their ancestral homes; so far, approximately 300,000 Serbs have been expelled, which was also confirmed in the report of the Secretary-General, specifying that

241,000 Serbs were expelled; this accounts only for the registered cases where the expelled Serbs found refuge in Krajina and in the territory of the FR of Yugoslavia (in the territory of Serbia alone, the number of Serb refugees exceeds 250,000 while their total number including the unregistered cases is certainly much higher); from the territory of Krajina alone, approximately 61,000 Serbs found refuge in Serbia, in addition to an unknown number who found refuge in the former republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina; the return to their ancestral homes has become impossible because Croats tore down their houses and made any economic activity impossible.

- Many Croatian towns have been ethnically cleansed of Serbs: Dubrovnik, where court proceedings were instituted in absentia against Serbs whose only guilt was their affiliation to Yugoslav oriented-political parties and where politically prominent Serbs were discredited on the basis of trumped-up charges and dismissed from all positions and jobs; Osijek, whose ex-Mayor Kramaric openly admitted that the war in Croatia was triggered by Croatia's attack on Borovo Selo;

- Most of the Serbs emigrated from many Croatian towns as a result of pressures exerted on them by unscrupulous methods: in the 1991/92 period, a total of 238,000 Serbs emigrated i.e. 30,000 from Karlovac, 28,000 from Zadar; 20,000 from Sisak, 5,000 from Gospic; 15,000 from Sibenik; 10,000 from Vinkovci,; 10,000 from Slavonski Brod; 10,000 from Daruvar and 10,000 from Podravska Slatina; according to incomplete data 100,000 Serbs emigrated from Zagreb (according to only one census on the Zagreb-Ljubljana Eparchy, 369 Serb families emigrated from this city); 330 Serb nationals emigrated from the Municipality of Imotski under the pressure of the Croatian authorities and armed forces, though unaffected by the war; substantiated data related to these and other Croatian towns and municipalities have already been included in the Report of the Government of the FR of Yugoslavia on war crimes, submitted in compliance with Security Council resolution 780;

- Data on the devastated Orthodox places of worship and shrines (churches and church facilities) are also striking: 133 facilities in areas unaffected by the war and 50 in the war-torn areas; 103 facilities were seriously, and 99 slightly damaged, which accounts for the total of 385 facilities;

- Priests of the Zagreb-Ljubljana Eparchy were exposed to threats, pressures and various orders of the authorities and subsequently expelled to smooth the way for the ethic cleansing of the Serb Orthodox population - i.e. 5 from the Synod Office in Zagreb, 5 from the Grubisino Polje Office and 6 from the Bjelovar Office, etc.

- The damages sustained by Serb refugees in economic terms is enormous - destroyed economic facilities in Serb areas, as well as houses and households of citizens of Serbian origin, etc. - the relevant bodies in the framework of the Geneva Conference on the former Yugoslavia will evaluate this damage and include it in the final distribution of assets and liabilities;

-The perfidy of the Croatian authorities can also be illustrated by the fact that the plans for the ethnic cleansing of western Slavonia include disposal of nuclear waste in the Western Sector (currently under UNPROFOR control). Those are: Daruvar, Podravska Slatina, Grubisino Polje, Diljska Gora, Maslovacka Gora and Bilogora; before the war, these areas were inhabited predominantly by Serbs.

These facts are incontestable and speak for themselves. It should only be emphasized once again that the sole responsibility for the outbreak of the crisis and the war in the former SFRY is borne by Slovenian and Croatian secessionists who seceded unconstitutionally and forcibly by an armed rebellion, thus pushing the peoples of this area into disasters of war. The consequences of this act are felt by all and the damage caused in the war affected areas does not exceed the harms sustained by the innocent citizens of the FR of Yugoslavia, particularly its most vulnerable categories, such as infants, children, the elderly and the sick, as a result of the cruel and unjust sanctions, unprecedented in the history of the United Nations, which the international community imposed on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

It is to be hoped that the above facts should be accorded an appropriate place in the mosaic of developments in the former SFRY and contribute to better understanding of the actual causes and consequences of the tragic events in these areas.